(b) The data required for working out T&D losses in the country for the year 1995-96 has not yet been received from all the SEBs/EDs.

(c) and (d). No, Sir. A reduction of about 2% in the T&D losses has been achieved during the first 3 years of the VIII Plan.

(e) The Commercial Component of losses which occur on account of theft of energy, metering related errors, unmetered supply etc. is not being worked out separately by the utilities.

(f) Power distribution falls within the purview of State Governments and SEBs/EDs are responsible to take necessary steps for reduction of losses. However, the Government has advised the utilities to improve their T&D system through a variety of short term & long term measures, install capacitors for reactive compensation, carry out energy audits to pinpoint system-elements responsible for high losses, control theft and take suitable other measures for reduction of T&D losses. Theft of energy has also been made a congnizable offence under the amended provisions of Section 39 of I.E. Act, 1910 and utilities advised to make maximum use of the amended provisions of the Act.

[English]

CM Conference

2325. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Chief Ministers' conference held recently in Delhi on Rural Development and some decisions were also taken;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the measures taken or proposed to be taken to implement these decisions;

(d) the amount expected to be incurred thereon;

(e) the rection of the Public, Presss, States and the Government thereon;

(f) the names of the participating States; and

(g) the details of the suggestions made by them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (g) The Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment had convened a Conference of Chief Ministers on Basic Minimum Services in New Delhi on 4-5th July, 1996. All the States/ UTs except Lakshadweep, and the concerned Union Ministries/Departments actively participated in the Conference. The deliberations of the conference were widely covered by the media. After discussion on Basic Minimum Services, the Conference adopted a set of recommendations. The major recommendations of the conference are given in the attached Statement. The concerned Union Ministries/Departments and all the State/UT Governments have been requested to process these recommendations expeditiously. The State/UT Governments have also been requested to identify a nodal Departmnet for processing these recommendations so that the Department of Programme Implementation in the Union Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation could correspond with them.

STATEMENT

Major Recommendations Adopted by the Conference of Chief Ministers on Basic Minimum Services held in New Delhi on 4th-5th July, 1996

The Conference congratulated the Prime Minister on taking the initiative to organise this discussion on Basic Minimum Services, which is a subject of national importance and high priority.

2. The Conference endorsed the seven basic Minimum Services enumerated in the Agenda as of paramount importance in securing a better quality of life for our people, especially those residing in rural areas. It would be in the best interests of the country, if time bound action plans are formulated to secure full coverage of the country with these seven Basic Services by 2000 A.D.

3. Such a time-bound and result oriented achievement was essential for the rapid growth of the economy and for social justice. These Basic Services should constitute the core of our social sector and Minimum Needs programmes. The priorities in these sectors and programmes should be revised to reflect the imperative need to concentrate our efforts and resources on these services.

4. The Conference noted that the two issues of (a) redefining Centre State relationships and (b) review of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, both of which find prominent mention in the Common Minimum Programme would be taken up in the forthcoming meetings of National Development Council, Inter-State Council etc. and decisions would be taken in consultation with the Chief Ministers.

5. The Conference recommended the adoption of the following objectives with an all out effort for their attainment by 2000 A.D.

(i) 100% Coverage of provision of safe drinking water in rural and urban areas.

(ii) 100% coverage of primany health service facilities in rural and urban areas.

(iii) Universalisation of primary education.

(iv) Provision of Public Housing Assistance to all shelterless poor families.

(v) Extension of Mid-day-Meal programme in primary schools, to all rural blocks and urban slums and disadvantaged sections.

(vi) Provision of connectivity to all unconnected villages and habitations.

(vii) Streamline the Public Distribution System with focus upon the poor.

6. Within these broad objectives agreed upon between the Centre and the State, the transfer of the Central share of funds be done with flexibilities given to the states in implementation, suiting local conditions and emphasis on involvement of people through elected Panchayats and municipalities.

7. Centrally Sponsored Schemes have proliferated in various Ministries. These schemes reflect the initiatives these Ministries have taken to focus on certain areas of national concern. Some are big while some schemes have small provision. There is considerable centralisation, rigigidy, delay and inequity in the administration of these schemes. In order to reflect appropriately the national priorities and to concentrate our efforts and resources on these priorities, the Conference suggested the streamlining of the Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

8. All Centrally Sponsored Schemes relating to the Seven Basic Minimum Services mentioned in Para 5 above, should be continued. Whithin these Basic Minimum Services, an all out effort should be made to secure (a) 100% covereage in provision of safe drinking water in rural and urban areas, (b) 100% coverage of primary health service facilities in rural and urban areas and (c) universalisation of primary education, within the next 2-3 years. However, States which have achieved satisfactory results in these areas can choose for their priority attention other components of these seven Basic Minimum Services suited to their requirements for full coverage in the next 2-3 years.

9. In the detarmination of allocations for these basic Minimum Services by the States and the Centre, the special needs of the States below national average may be taken into consideration.

10. In addition, the Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the Area of Urban and rural poverty alleviation and employment, development of desert & drought-prone areas, nutrition, and for the welfare of SCs/STs/minorities and disabled persons of our society, should be conitnued as such and States be given greater involvement, freedom and flexibility in the implementaion of these programmes.

11. Provisions available under Centrally Sponsored Schemes other than those mentioned in Para 8 and Para 10 above, should be pooled and basic State entitlement ratios should be worked out on the basis of allocations made to the States in 1995-96. The States should be free to select for implementation, from the list of these Centraly Sponsored Schemes circulated by the Centre, suiting their needs for using their annual entitlement.

12. The States annual entitlement under all Centrally sponsored Schemes should be increased by 15-20% every year.

13. The Department of Programme Implementation in the Union Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation would work out the details of these revisions in the guidelines and procedures in consultation with the relevant Central Ministries and a group of Chief Ministers. This exercise may be complete within one month, so that the revisions and changes would be available during theis year itself.

14. The Conference recommended regular Central and State joint monitoring and reviews of these programmes.

15. The Conference endorsed that the funds allocated for these basic Minimum Needs in the State and the Central plan should not be diverted and these funds should be made available in two instalments to the implementing agencies in consultation with State Governments. The first instalment would automatically be released to the implementing agencies in the first week of April and the Second instalment will be conditional to at least 50% expenditure of available funds and upon furnishing utilisation details/certificates.

[Translation]

Killing of Bihari Labourers

2326. SHRI CHUN CHUN PRASAD YADAV : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the killing of the Bihari labourers in the terroriest attacks of Jammu and Kashmir militants; and

(b) if so, the number of labourers killed therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b). 11 labourers hailing from district Ballia, Uttar Pradesh, and not from Bihar were killed on the night of 6-7 July, 1996 by the militants at Batkote near Handwara in Kupwara district of Jammu & Kashmir.

[English]

Housing Problem in Delhi

2327. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Capital facing acute housing shortage" appearing in the "Statesman" dated June 9, 1996;